ALONE WITH GOD . . .

Occasional Prayers

PRAYERS TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

PRAYERS TO ST. GERARD MAJELLA, C.SS.R.

MORNING PRAYER

I adore Thee, O my God, and I Love Thee with all my heart. I give Thee thanks that Thou hast created me, made me a Christian, and preserved me this night. I offer Thee the actions of this day, grant that all of them may be according to Thy Holy Will, and for Thy greater glory. Save me from sin and from all evil. Let Thy grace be always with me. Amen.

THE "ANGELUS"

The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary, and she conceived of the Holy Spirit. (1 Hail Mary)

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word." (1 Hail Mary)

And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. (1 Hail Mary)

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of

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God. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace onto our hearts that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son, was made known by the message of an Angel, may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

NIGHT PRAYER

Jesus Christ my God, I adore Thee and thank Thee for all the graces Thou hast given me this day. I offer Thee my sleep and all the moments of this night, and I beseech Thee to keep me without sin. Wherefore I put myself within Thy sacred Side and under the mantle of our Lady, my Mother. Let Thy Holy Angels stand about me and keep me in peace; and let Thy blessing be upon me.

PRAYER BEFORE MEALS

Bless us, O Lord, and these Your gifts, which we are about to receive from Your bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER MEALS

We give You thanks for all Your blessings, Almighty God, who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Oh, My Jesus, I believe that Thou art truly present in the Most Blessed Sacrament; I love Thee above all things and I desire to receive Thee into my soul. Since I cannot now receive Thee sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace Thee as if Thou were already there and unite myself wholly to Thee. Never permit me to be separated from Thee.

PRAYER BEFORE CONFESSION

O my God, I believe in You. O my God, I hope in You. O my God, I love You, above all things. I adore You, here truly present, with all the Angels and Saints. I am a poor creature, that is not worthy to pray to You. But remembering your infinite goodness I come to You with the greatest confidence. Give me grace to know my sins, to be heartily sorry for them, to make a sincere confession of them, to obtain forgiveness of them, and to sin no more.

O Holy Spirit, You came down upon the Apostles. Come down also upon me at this all-important moment. Help me to make a good confession and to be reconciled to God.

PRAYER BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION

My Lord and my God, once more I approach the altar to receive Thy most august Sacrament.

Once more am I privileged to receive Thee, the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, to receive Thee, the Most High God in Whose All-Holy Presence the Saints and Seraphim reside. Once more I go to receive Thee, the touch of Whose garments alone healed the sick. What shall I do to prepare for Thy coming since in Thy sight even the Angels are not pure. O my God, my Redeemer, how is that Thou dost desire to confer on me this great favor. Behold I offer Thee my tears of penance and love. Deign to accept my heart and my will. I ask for many things — give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our sins, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil. Preserve from harm Thy holy Church, direct our Holy Father, the Pope; be merciful to all the faithful, enlighten unbelievers. Bless my parents, my brothers, my sisters, all my friends, my enemies. Do thou, my heavenly Mother, ac-

cept my thanks for Thy wonderful intercession. Be at all times my refuge and my consolation. My holy patrons, whom I have chosen as intercessors at the throne of the Most High, come to my assistance. My holy Guardian Angel, my faithful guide, accept my tears of repentance and present them to my Judge and to my Redeemer.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water flowing from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O good Jesus, hear me. Hide me within Your wounds. Never permit me to be separated from You. From the malignant enemy, defend me. At the hour of my death, call me. And bid me to come to You. That with Your Saints, I may praise You. For everlasting ages. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

O almighty and everlasting God, the eternal salvation of them that believe, hear our prayers for Thy sick servants for whom we implore Thy mercy, that with restored health they may render Thee thanks in Thy Church.

O God, Thou at Whose will the moments of our life run on, receive the prayers and sacrifices of Thy servants, for whom we beseech Thy mercy in their sickness, that, as we have feared for their peril, we may rejoice for their safety.

O God, the sole defense of human infirmity, show forth Thy power upon Thy sick servants, that, being assisted by the help of Thy mercy, they may be found worthy to be brought back in health to Thy Holy Church. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO LIVE ALONE

I live alone, dear Lord. Stay by my side. In all my daily needs be Thou my guide. Grant me good health, for that indeed, I pray, to carry on my work from day to day. Keep pure my mind, my thoughts, my every deed. Let me be kind, unselfish in my neighbor's need. Spare me from fire, from flood, malicious tongues, from thieves, from fear, and evil ones. If sickness or an accident befall, then humbly, Lord, I pray, hear Thou my call. And when I'm feeling low, or in despair, lift up my heart and help me in my prayer. I live alone, dear Lord, yet have no fear, because I feel Your presence ever near. Amen.

PRAYER FOR POOR SOULS

O most compassionate Jesus! have mercy on the souls detained in Purgatory, for whose redemption Thou didst take upon Thee

our nature and endure a bitter death. Mercifully hear their groanings; look with pity on the tears which they now shed before Thee, and by the virtue of Thy Passion release them from the pains due unto their sins. O most pitiful Jesus, let Thy precious Blood flow down into Purgatory, and refresh and revive the captive souls suffering there. Stretch out unto them Thy strong right hand, and bring them forth into the place of refreshment, light and peace. Amen.

PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART

Jesus, meek and humble of heart,

Make our hearts like unto Yours.

O Heart of Jesus, burning with love for us, inflame our hearts with love for You.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, may You be known, loved and imitated.

O Heart of my dear Redeemer, may the love of Your friends make amends for all the injuries and neglects which You sustain.

Let us, with Mary Immaculate, adore, thank, pray to, and console, the most sacred and well-beloved Eucharistic Heart of Jesus.

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

How much I love Thee, O my Jesus! I wish to love Thee with my whole heart; yet I do not love Thee enough. My lack of devotion and my sloth still haunt me. I have one desire, that of being near Thee in the Blessed Sacrament. Thou art the sweet bridegroom of my soul. My Jesus, my love, my all, gladly would I endure hunger, thirst, heat and cold to remain always with Thee in the Blessed Sacrament. Would that in Thy Eucharistic presence I might unceasingly weep over my sins.

PRAYER FOR MISSIONARIES

O Lord Jesus Christ, who through Your own suffering and death gained salvation for us here on earth, bless our missionaries whose lives are dedicated to the salvation of souls. Give them the grace to bear their poverty and suffering as You did Yours. Give them courage, an unselfish spirit of sacrifice and true confidence to spread Your divine truths. Grant them success in their endeavors, answer their prayers and give them faith to carry Your words to the ends of the earth so that all may gain eternal life with You in Heaven. Amen.

Our Mother of Perpetual Help, through your intercession with your Divine Son, assist all missionaries to spread knowledge and love of Christ to all the people of the world.

HISTORY OF THE MIRACULOUS PICTURE OF OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

About the time that Columbus brought the *Santa Maria* to the shores of the Americas, another sailing vessel was bringing this wonder-working image to the shores of Europe. Who painted it, or when, we do not know. It had been venerated in the isle of Crete and from Crete it came to Rome. There it was retained by a private family until our Blessed Mother herself appeared to the little girl of the household and told her that she wished her picture to be placed in a Church. She even designated the place — "between my beloved Church of St. Mary Major's and that of my beloved son, St. John of Lateran."

On March 27, 1499, the picture was exposed for veneration, as she ordered, in the Church of St. Matthew where it remained for three long centuries drawing pilgrims from all parts of the Christian world. In 1798 war demolished the venerable structure, but the picture was not allowed to perish. The good Augustinian Fathers, who all these years had been in charge of St. Matthew's, took it with them to the new monastery granted them by Pope Pius VII in another part of the city.

The very last member of their Order to be professed in old St. Matthew's was Brother Augustine Orsetti. In his new home he had as a frequent visitor a youth named Michael Marchi, who later became a Redemptorist priest. The Redemptorists came to Rome in 1855 and built a Church in honor of their founder, St. Alphonsus, on the site of the ancient St. Matthew's. The old Brother had often

spoken to young Michael about the Madonna in the monastery Chapel saying, "Don't forget now — mind me well — the picture in our Chapel is the one that was venerated in old St. Matthew's. It was indeed a miraculous picture."

So when Father Marchi told of the miracle-working image in the Augustinian monastery, the Redemptorists petitioned Pope Pius IX to have the image placed in the Church on the spot chosen by Our Lady herself. And the Pope in granting the request said: "It is our will that this picture of the Blessed Virgin be returned to the Church between St. Mary Major's and St. John Lateran's." At the same time he commanded the Redemptorists to "make her known" all over the world.

On April 26, 1866, a solemn procession carried the miraculous Madonna to her chosen spot in the Church of St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori, one of Mary's greatest

lovers and defenders. Today the original painting reposes in Rome while millions of replicas bring her and her Perpetual Help to all men everywhere.

OFFICIAL O.L.P.H NOVENA PRAYERS

First - Fourth - Seventh Day or Week

Behold at Thy feet, O Mother of Perpetual Help! a wretched sinner who has recourse to Thee, and confides in Thee. O Mother of Mercy! have pity on me. I hear Thee called by all, the Refuge and the Hope of sinners; be then, my refuge and my hope. Assist me, for the love of Jesus Christ; stretch forth Thy hand to a miserable fallen creature, who recommends himself to Thee, and who devotes himself to Thy service forever. I

bless and thank Almighty God, Who in His mercy has given me this confidence in Thee, which I hold to be a pledge of my eternal salvation. It is true, dearest Mother, that in the past I have miserably fallen into sin, because I had not recourse to Thee. I know, that with Thy help, I shall conquer. I know, too, that Thou wilt assist me, if I recommend myself to Thee; but I fear, dear Mother that in time of danger, I may neglect to call on Thee, and thus lose my soul. This grace, then I ask of Thee, and this I beg, with all the fervor of my soul, that in all the attacks of hell, I may ever have recourse to Thee. O Mary! help me; O Mother of Perpetual Help, never suffer me to lose my God.

9 Hail Marys

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray

O Lord Jesus Christ who didst give us Thy Mother Mary, whose renowned image we venerate, to be a Mother ever ready to help us, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who constantly implore her maternal aid may merit to enjoy perpetually the fruits of Thy redemption, Who livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen.

Second - Fifth - Eighth Day or Week

O MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP! grant that I may ever invoke Thy most powerful name, which is the safeguard of the living and the salvation of the dying. O Purest Mary! O Sweetest Mary! let Thy name henceforth be ever on my lips. Delay not, O Blessed Lady! to help me whenever I call on Thee; for, in all my temptations, in all my needs, I shall never cease to call on Thee, ever repeating Thy sacred name, Mary! Mary! O, what consolation, what

sweetness, what confidence, what emotion fills my soul when I utter Thy Sacred Name, or even only think of Thee! I thank the Lord for having given Thee, for my good, so sweet, so powerful, so lovely a name. But I will not be content with merely uttering Thy name, let my love for Thee prompt me ever to hail Thee, MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP.

9 Hail Marys

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R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray

O Lord Jesus Christ who didst give us Thy Mother Mary, whose renowned image we venerate, to be a Mother ever ready to help us, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who constantly implore her maternal aid may merit to enjoy perpetually the fruits of Thy redemption, Who livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen.

O MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP, Thou art the dispenser of all the gifts which God grants to us miserable sinners; and for this end He has made Thee so powerful, so rich and so bountiful, in order that Thou mayest help us in our misery. Thou art the advocate of the most wretched and abandoned sinners who have recourse to Thee; come to my aid, dearest Mother, for I recommend myself to Thee. In Thy hands I place my eternal salvation, and to Thee I entrust my soul. Count me among Thy most devoted servants; take me under Thy protection, and it is enough for me. For, if Thou protect me, dear Mother, I fear nothing; not from my sins, because Thou wilt obtain for me the pardon of them, nor from the devils, because Thou art more powerful than all hell together; nor even from Jesus, my Judge, because by one prayer from Thee, He will be

appeased. But one thing I fear, that in the hour of temptation, I may through negligence fail to have recourse to Thee and thus perish miserably. Obtain for me, therefore, the pardon of my sins, love for Jesus, final perseverance, and the grace to have recourse to Thee, O Mother of Perpetual Help.

9 Hail Marys

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray

O Lord Jesus Christ who didst give us Thy Mother Mary, whose renowned image we venerate, to be a Mother ever ready to help us, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who constantly implore her maternal aid may merit to enjoy perpetually the fruits of Thy redemption, Who livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen.

HISTORY OF GERARD MAJELLA

Gerard Majella was born at Muro, in Southern Italy, April 6, 1726. His parents were an ordinary, hard-working couple, rich only in their faith. So delicate was the new-comer at his birth that he had to be baptized immediately.

Divine favours were lavished on Gerard even during childhood. For instance, the Infant Jesus often came to play with him; and it was the great archangel St. Michael, who miraculously gave him his first Holy Communion.

At the age of twelve, owing to the death of his father, Gerard had to become the bread-winner for his mother and three sisters. He followed his father's trade—tailoring. Eventually, he opened a tailoring business of his own. But he was not meant for the business of this world. God was calling him. Twice he applied to become a Capuchin. Each time he was rejected because of his frail health. Then the Redemptorist Fathers came to preach a mission at Muro. He stormed them with his entreaties and finally became a Redemptorist Brother.

He spent only six years in religion. But how glorious they were. By his penances, his humility, his obedience, he showed himself a true disciple of his crucified Master. When accompanying the Fathers on missions he outstripped them all in his zeal for souls. His life was one big prayer—one long act of ardent love for Jesus and Mary.

Little wonder, then, that it received the divine stamp of miracles. So numerous and outstanding were the prodigies performed by Gerard that people called him the "wonder-worker".

Gerard died at midnight, October 15, 1755, aged twenty-nine and a half years. He was canonized by Pope Pius X, December 11, 1904, and October 16th was fixed as his feast.

From his place in heaven our saint is still a wonder-worker: more so than ever, for he now has the whole world as the theatre of his operations. His faithful clients everywhere cannot find words to express their gratitude to their heavenly intercessor and patron.

Because of the difficulties he experienced in following his own vocation, he is invoked as the patron of vocations. Because of his gift of reading the consciences of others he is hailed as the patron of a good confession. And because of the special protection he gives to expectant mothers and to sick children he is acclaimed throughout the world as the patron of mothers—the Mothers' Saint.

NOVENA TO ST. GERARD

Strive each day to practice the virtue indicated in the petition.

1st Day—St. Gerard, *ever full of faith,* obtain for me, that believing firmly all that the Church of God proposes to my belief, I may strive to secure through a holy life the joys of eternal happiness.

Then say *Nine Hail Marys,* with the following Versicle and Prayer.

V. Pray for us, O Saint Gerard.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray

O Almighty and Everlasting God, who drew to Yourself Saint Gerard, even from his tenderest years, making him conformable to the Image of Your Crucified Son, grant we beseech you, that imitating his example, we may be made like unto the same Divine Image, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

2nd Day—St. Gerard, *most generous saint,* who from your tenderest years did care so little for the goods of earth, grant that I may place all my confidence in Jesus Christ alone, my true Treasure, who alone can make me happy in time and eternity. *Nine Hail Marys, with Versicle and Prayer as on 1st Day.*

3rd Day—St. Gerard, *bright seraph of love,* who despising all earthly love, did consecrate your life to the service of God and your neighbor, promoting God's glory in your lowly state, and ever ready *to assist the distressed and console the sorrowful,* obtain for me, I beseech you, that loving God the only Good and my neighbor for His sake, I may be hereafter united to Him for ever in glory. *Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st Day.*

4th Day—St. Gerard, *spotless lily of purity,* by your angelic virtue and your wonderful innocence of life you did receive from the Infant Jesus and His Immaculate Mother, sweet pledges of tenderest love, grant, I beseech you, that I may ever strive manfully in my life-long fight, and thus win the crown that awaits the brave and the true. *Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st Day.*

5th Day—St. Gerard, *model of holy obedience,* who through your life did heroically submit your judgment to those who represent Jesus Christ to you, thus sanctifying your lowliest actions, obtain for me from God cheerful submission to His Holy Will and the virtue of perfect obedience, that I may be made conformable to Jesus, my Model, who was obedient even to death. *Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st Day.*

6th Day—St. Gerard, *most perfect imitator of Jesus Our Redeemer,* whose greatest glory was to be humble and lowly, obtain that I too, knowing my

littleness in God's sight may be found worthy to enter the kingdom that is promised to the humble and lowly of heart *Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st Day.*

7th Day—St. Gerard, *unconquered hero, most patient in suffering,* who did glory in infirmity, and under slander and most cruel ignominy did rejoice to suffer with Christ, obtain for me patience and resignation in my sorrows, that I may bravely bear the cross that is to gain for me the crown of everlasting glory. *Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st Day.*

8th Day—St. Gerard, *true lover of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar,* who did kneel long hours before the Tabernacle, and there did taste the joys of paradise, obtain for me an undying love for the Most Holy Sacrament, that by receiving frequently the Body and Blood of Jesus, I may daily grow in His Holy love and merit the priceless grace of loving Him even to the end. *Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st Day.*

9th Day—St. Gerard, *most favored child of heaven,* to whom Mary gave the Infant Jesus in the days of your childhood, to whom she sweetly came before you closed your eyes in death, obtain for me I beseech you, to seek and love my Blessed Mother during life, that she may be my joy and consolation in this valley of tears, until with you, before the throne of God, I may praise her goodness for all eternity. Amen. *Nine Hail Marys, etc., as on 1st Day.*

Prayer for Special Blessings

Dear St. Gerard, we rejoice in your happiness and glory, we bless the Lord Who endowed you with the choicest gifts of His Grace, we congratulate you for corresponding so faithfully with them. Obtain for us, we pray you, some part of your angelic purity, your burning love for Jesus in the Tabernacle, your tender devotion to Mary Immaculate. In your brotherly love which made you the support of the poor, the comforter of the afflicted and the apostle of the most forsaken souls, grant me the favors for which I now pray.

(Here Mention Them Privately)

O most Powerful Patron, who hast always helped those who prayed to you, intercede for me before the Throne of God. O Good Saint, to you I confide my fervent prayers; graciously accept them and, before the end of these days of prayer, let me experience in some way, the effects of your powerful intercession. Amen.

Prayer for Respect for Life

St. Gerard Majella, women the world over have adopted you as their patron in the joys and fears of childbearing. Today, we invoke your intercession for the pro-life movement. Pray that all will look upon human life as a great gift from God to be accepted and loved, not as an unwanted burden to be destroyed. Assist from

heaven the efforts of those on earth who are enlisted in the Christlike crusade of promoting the dignity and value of all human life, particularly the unborn. This we ask through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Against the Forces of Anti-Life

O Great Wonder-worker of our day, St. Gerard, powerful protector of the mother and her unborn child, beg God, we beseech you, to crush the mounting forces of anti-life; and to enlighten those who walk in this deadly way, that they may see the enormity of their sin, and return to the generous observance of the divine law. Pray, too, for mothers, that they may prize the great privilege of motherhood, and that they may bring up their children in the holy love and fear of God, so saving their own immortal souls and furthering the honor and glory of their Maker, through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

For a Sick Person

O God, Who did bestow on St. Gerard the power of healing all kinds of infirmities, deign to glorify Thy Servant, who was so merciful toward human misery, by delivering me from my present sickness. Grant also that, being strengthened in body, I may take greater care to avoid sin and overcome my evil passions, the spiritual diseases that drag so many to everlasting death. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

For a Sick Child

O St. Gerard, who like the Saviour, loved children so tenderly and by your prayers freed many from disease and even from death; graciously look down upon the distressed parents who plead with you for their child's health if such be the Will of God. Present their promise to God to bring up the child a good Christian and to guard it by word and example against the fatal leprosy of sin. This favor we implore you, O sainted Brother, through the tender love with which Jesus and Mary blessed your own innocent childhood. Amen.

For a Mother with Child

O Almighty and Everlasting God Who through the operation of the Holy Spirit, did prepare the body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mary to be a worthy dwelling place of Your Divine Son; and, through the operation of the same Holy Spirit, did sanctify St. John the Baptist, while still in his mother's womb; hearken to the prayers of your humble servant who implores You, through the intercession of St. Gerard, to protect her (me) amid the dangers of child-bearing and to watch over the child with which You have deigned to bless her (me); that it may be cleansed by the saving water of Baptism and, after a Christian life on earth, it may with its mother attain everlasting bliss in Heaven. Amen.

EUCHARISTIC FAST

General Law — Those preparing to receive Communion must abstain from all food and drink for one hour prior to the reception of the Sacred Host. If an alcoholic beverage is taken before the hour of abstinence, due moderation is to be observed.

Exceptions to Eucharistic Fast

Water may be taken any time before Communion.

The Sick, whether in a hospital or at home (even if not confined to bed), may take non-alcoholic beverages and true medicine, solid or liquid, any time before receiving. Food and alcoholic drink may be taken up to fifteen minutes before reception.

The Elderly enjoy the same privileges as the sick, whether at home or in a home for the aged.

Other: The exceptions for the sick and elderly apply to their relatives and those who take care of them,

if they wish to receive with them and are unable to observe the fast of one hour.

General Laws of Fast & Abstinence

Fast: all persons from the completion of their 21st year to completion of the 59th year are obliged to FAST on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. FASTING allows one full meal but a light breakfast and lunch are not forbidden.

Abstinence: all persons from the completion of their 14th year are obliged to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all other Fridays during Lent except those designated as Holidays by competent authority. Meat soups, condiments from fat of meat, milk products and eggs do not violate the rule of abstinence.

On Fridays, when abstinence is not required by law, acts of devotion, self-denial, and charity in a spirit of piety and penance are suggested. Abstinence from meat is especially recommended but under no obligation by law.

MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP, INTERCEDE FOR ALL MISSIONARIES

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